



CONSTIPATION

Intellectually and Developmentally Disabled Fatal Four

Definition — Constipation occurs when an individual has difficult or infrequent bowel movements. Constipation can lead to a blockage in the small or large intestine which prevents stool and gas from moving through in the usual way.

Why are individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities at a high risk?

- Lack of mobility
- Diet (e.g. lack of fiber or liquid)
- Certain medications (e.g. antidepressants, antihistamines, calcium and iron supplements, narcotic pain medicine)

Signs & Symptoms

- Vomiting
- Bloating or hard stomach
- Decreased bowel sounds
- Behavioral outbursts
- Refusing meals
- Hard or small stools

Preventative Action Steps

- Increase the amount of fiber intake
- Increase liquid intake
- Increase activity
- Limit caffeine consumption
- Track and document bowel movements for individuals at risk

